

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

★ JUL 6 1940 ★

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
JULY 3, 1940

U. S. Department of Agriculture

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

THIAMIN, OR VITAMIN B₁

EDITORS PLEASE NOTE: This is the sixth in the series of monthly articles based on the 1939 Yearbook of Agriculture--"Food and Life." A reprint of Part I of this volume, called "Human Nutrition," can be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents in Washington, D. C. The price is forty cents.

Practical nutrition took a big step forward about 50 years ago, when a change in the diet of Japanese sailors cured them of the disease, called beriberi. Adding whole-grain barley to their diet made the difference, although nobody knew exactly why. It took many years to discover that the sailors had been discarding the valuable vitamin B₁ (thiamin) when they threw away the outer layers of the rice grains and ate only the polished rice.

At first nutritionists called this food factor "vitamine B." Later they discovered that this substance was really a group of vitamins, which is now called the vitamin B-complex. They have learned about several of the vitamins in this group; and the one that is needed to cure beriberi, they have named vitamin B₁ or thiamin.

Persons whose diets contain too little thiamin show a marked loss of appetite and suffer from constipation and other signs of intestinal disorder. When the diet is very low in thiamin over a long period of time, the disease beriberi

results. This disease brings about an enlargement of the heart, an abnormally low pulse rate, sometimes a marked swelling of the limbs, tenderness of the muscles, and nervous disorders.

Beriberi is not a common disease in this country today, but there are many persons who could enjoy better health if their diets were richer in thiamin. This vitamin is widely distributed in natural foods, but only a few foods are rich sources. Also, the body does not store this vitamin, so it is necessary to get a steady supply.

Among the rich sources of thiamin are the whole-grain cereals such as wheat, oats, rye, and barley. Dried peas, dried beans, brown rice, soybeans, and peanuts are also excellent sources. It seems that the thiamin is stored in seeds where it will be ready for use when the plant starts to grow.

Lean pork is another very rich source. Some of this thiamin is lost when the pork is cooked, especially when it is roasted. But pork should never be served undercooked to save the thiamin, because thorough cooking is necessary to kill the trichinae which may be present.

Green peas and green lima beans are good sources of thiamin, and many other vegetables also contain some. However, the method of cooking makes a great difference in the amount of thiamin that people actually get from vegetables.

A recent study made by the Federal Bureau of Home Economics showed that a considerable amount of the thiamin is destroyed during the cooking of vegetables. Cooking vegetables the right way will cut this loss to a minimum. So remember to cook them in as little water as possible, and to stop cooking as soon as the vegetables are tender.

Even more of the thiamin is lost when green vegetables are cooked with soda to conserve their bright color. The addition of soda is not necessary, if green vegetables are cooked as short a time as possible in an uncovered pan, or if they are cooked quickly in the sauce-pan type of pressure cooker.

In addition, as much as 15 percent of the thiamin may be dissolved in the cooking water. So if there is any water left, serve it with the vegetables. Also be sure to use the juice from canned vegetables.

About four years ago, scientists succeeded in getting thiamin in crystalline form, so it can now be purchased as tablets. But a well-balanced diet including whole grains in cereals and bread, peanuts, dried beans, dried peas, some lean pork, and correctly cooked vegetables will furnish the necessary thiamin and other important food values as well.

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
JULY 10, 1940 :

RECEIVED
★ JUL 16 1940 ★
U.S. Department of Agriculture

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

SIMPLE MEALS FOR SUMMER

Simple meals have more appeal during the summer, and they give the home-maker more free hours for a vacation right at home. You'll want to fool the weatherman with refreshing chilled dishes. Crisp salads, iced beverages, jellied soups, and frozen desserts can be prepared ahead of time and be ready to serve when the dinner bell rings.

You'll also want at least one hot dish, even when the mercury soars. For variety in the hot dish try serving creamed ham, veal, chicken, or seafood in the center of a hot ring mold -- made of rice or noodles. Or serve the creamed food in patty shells. Another idea is to use a meat mixture for stuffing such vegetables as peppers, tomatoes, or cabbage leaves. And there'll be no end to your list of hot dishes if you use cheese, fish, or left-over meat in casserole dishes with vegetables and some starchy food such as rice, noodles, or spaghetti.

Egg dishes usually require little preparation and most of them cook quickly. You might have eggs baked in individual serving dishes, an omelet, souffle, or timbales. To make these egg dishes a hearty main course -- add some cheese, left-over meat, fish, or vegetables.

Fresh vegetables are included in good diet plans the year around, but the summer vegetables seem most interesting because they are so colorful. Right now many vegetables come fresh from nearby farms, and are low in price.

With so many vegetables to choose from, you may be tempted to plan an entire meal around them. For a vegetable plate you might choose fresh peas for their bright green color, roasting ears of white or yellow corn, or plump red tomatoes to broil or bake. Snap beans and lima beans are also at their peak in most localities, and the season for yellow squash is beginning. New beets and carrots are plentiful too.

Some of the less common greens suggest ways to vary summer salads. Tender young leaf lettuce is always a favorite. Romaine, chicory, endive, and escarole are other salad greens to try.

In buying vegetables it's best to make a personal selection in order to get fresh, firm vegetables that are free from bruises. Those of uniform size and regular shape have less waste and are easiest to prepare. Most vegetables are best when eaten as soon as possible after they reach the home kitchen, especially peas and corn because they lose much of their flavor after standing only a short time. If the vegetables are not to be cooked at once, wash them carefully and store them in a covered dish in the refrigerator to keep crisp.

The summer fruit bowl is easy to fill with peaches, plums, grapes, apricots, cherries, and berries now on the market -- in addition to the year-round bananas, apples, pears, and oranges. The melon season is also in full swing with watermelons cantaloupes, honey balls, and honey dews available. Use fruits generously in fruit cups as a first course, in salads, and for dessert. They need little or no preparation, and they round out the food values of the day's meals.

Use the fruit alone for dessert, or use it in one of your summer specialties -- ice cream or sherbert. These frozen desserts are convenient for the cook, and a delight to the family.

In planning summer meals, the beverage sometimes presents a problem. Iced beverages are usually the choice on hot days, but they should not be allowed to take the place of the daily quart of milk for the children and the pint of milk for adults. Milk, itself, is refreshing when served as cold as it should be to keep safely. For variety you can make a milk shake, with chocolate sirup or sweetened fruit juice.

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
JULY 17, 1940 :

LIBRARY
RECEIVED
★ JUL 13 1940 ★
U. S. Department of Agriculture
THE MARKET BASKET

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1.9
7875M
by
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

MANAGING THE REFRIGERATOR

Homemakers of a few generations back were fortunate if they could keep food cool in the cellar or in a spring house some distance from the kitchen. Homemakers today take for granted the refrigerator in the kitchen. They rely on the cold air circulating in the refrigerator cabinet to check the growth of invisible bacteria and molds that quickly cause spoilage in perishable foods at room temperature.

But the homemaker must manage the refrigerator ~~correctly~~ to get her money's worth in food protection. The first step in refrigerator management, is to place the cabinet so it will fit in with a scheme of good kitchen planning.

Locate the refrigerator conveniently, with a work table nearby to hold food as you take it out and put it in. If possible, also have the refrigerator near the sink for ease in the preparation of food. Then plan to make as few trips as possible to the refrigerator, because every time you open the door the ice or the freezing unit must chill the warm air that rushes in.

To help the refrigerator run as economically as possible, see that it is on the level. Also be sure that it is in a cool place. You'll want it as far as possible from the stove and sunny windows, and during the winter you'll want it away from the radiator.

Arrangement of food on the shelves is another important part of managing the refrigerator. Don't store foods hit-or-miss and don't overcrowd the shelves, if you want to operate your refrigerator economically. It takes ice or energy to cool every single thing that goes into the refrigerator. When you chill food to keep it from spoiling, you're saving money; but when you chill extra dishes and containers, you're wasting money.

A temperature under 50 degrees F. will keep most perishable foods a reasonable length of time. But a refrigerator should have some spot that is 45 degrees F., or lower, to keep dairy products and uncooked meats. This coldest spot in the refrigerator is usually located directly below or beside the ice or freezing unit. Your dealer can tell you the temperature in different parts of the cabinet and explain where to put certain foods. Or you can check the temperature yourself with a thermometer.

To keep milk cold and sweet is one of the refrigerator's most important jobs. Ordinances in most cities insure the consumer of a pure milk supply, kept safe through proper refrigeration. But from the minute milk is delivered it is the homemaker's responsibility to keep it as cold as possible.

Milk, cream, and butter take up odors from other foods, so keep them covered in the coldest part of the refrigerator. The same rule holds good for milk desserts and milk in left-over dishes such as cream soups, sauces, and creamed vegetables. These foods are a perfect place for bacteria to grow. So keep milk mixtures cold, and use them as soon as possible.

Meats, fish, and poultry must also be put in the coldest part of the refrigerator as soon as they come from the market. Unwrap the meat and place it in a clean dish with a loose covering of paraffin paper. Many models of mechanical refrigerators have special meat containers directly below the freezing units. Uncooked fish should be kept only a very short time, and it is best to keep it in the coldest possible place, wrapped in paraffin paper to protect other foods from odor.

Eggs, too, should go into the refrigerator without delay. A few hours at room temperature, and the eggs can no longer be accurately called "fresh." If the eggs are purchased in a paper carton, remove them and place in a bowl or a wire basket. Many refrigerators provide a special basket for this purpose.

Vegetables do not need as much care in storage as dairy products, meat, and eggs. Most cooks like to get their vegetables garden-fresh as often as possible, so they do not have to keep them on hand very long.

Many vegetables keep just as well, or better, outside the refrigerator. The tubers--potatoes, turnips, carrots, and others--keep well at room temperature. And there is no need to use the refrigerator for vegetables with strong odors--such as cauliflower, green onions, and Brussels sprouts--if they are to be used in a day or two.

But vegetables for salads are another story. Wash your salad greens and remove any leaves that are not to be used, then keep them cold and crisp in a covered vegetable pan or oil-silk bag in the refrigerator. Cucumbers, tomatoes, radishes (tops removed), green peppers, and any other vegetables for salads should be kept in a covered crisping pan or vegetable compartment.

Most fruits are protected against spoilage as long as their skins remain unbroken. Pears, peaches, and other fruits are usually kept at room temperature to become fully ripe. But if the fruit is "dead ripe" you can keep it in the refrigerator to slow down decay. Berries and cherries, which mold quickly when warm or damp, should be kept uncovered on a tray in the coldest possible place.

See that the refrigerator and all the containers used in it are clean at all times, to make sure that foods are safe from spoilage. If you spill food, wipe it up at once. And remember the importance of a weekly cleaning -- after defrosting a mechanical refrigerator, or when the ice supply is low in an ice refrigerator. Remove all the food and use warm suds with a little soda added. Wash the inside of

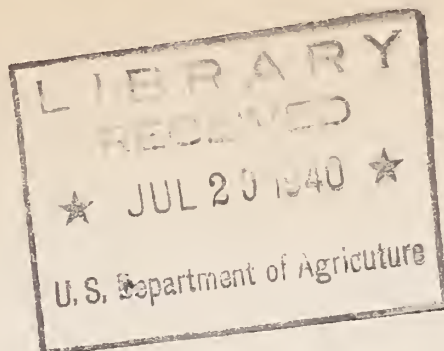
of the cabinet, the shelves, the containers, and any covers for food such as those made of oil silk or metal foil. Rinse with clear water and wipe dry. The ice refrigerator also has a drain pipe and drain trap that must be washed and scalded. And the mechanical refrigerator has an evaporator and ice cube trays that must be washed.

A refrigerator is a valuable piece of equipment if it is given the right care. But it must not be mistreated. It cannot work efficiently if it is so crowded that the air cannot circulate. It is bound to use more ice, electricity, gas, or kerosene if it must chill extra containers, hot dishes, and foods that do not need refrigeration. If it is a good refrigerator and properly managed, it will keep perishable foods for a reasonable length of time.

- - - Y - - -

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture



RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
JULY 24, 1940 :

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

TRY SOME UNUSUAL VEGETABLES

When the vegetable dish is a surprise, the entire meal seems more appetizing. And there are plenty of possibilities for the cook who likes to experiment with an unusual vegetable or to try a new way of cooking a familiar vegetable.

A trip through any city market will show you how many unusual vegetables are in season. Eggplant attracts the eye with its sleek purple curves. Swiss chard stands out among other leafy vegetables because of its thick, rich green leaves and white stalks. Kohlrabi, an above-the-ground turnip with leaves sprouting out like the quills of a porcupine, always draws questions from the uninitiated. So do the fat pods of okra that look like stubby green pencils. Garden soybeans, covered with a velvety fuzz, are among the late-comers to the list of green vegetables.

Then there are tricks to try in cooking some of the everyday vegetables such as cucumbers, radishes, green onions, and celery cabbage. They seem very different when they step out of their role as salad vegetables.

Down south where much of the eggplant is grown, this vegetable is cooked at least half a dozen different ways. For a real specialty, scallop the eggplant with

tomatoes, and add green pepper and onion for extra flavor.

Select an eggplant that is firm and heavy, with a uniform dark color and no blemishes. You'll find that one weighing about 2 pounds will be enough to serve 5 to 6 persons. Pare off the skin, and cut the vegetable in small even pieces. Then melt 2 tablespoons of fat in a skillet, add a chopped green pepper and small onion, and cook for a few minutes. Next add the eggplant, a quart of canned tomatoes or chopped raw tomatoes, salt, and pepper. Cook about 10 minutes more. Place the mixture in a shallow greased baking dish. Mix about 1 cup of fine bread crumbs with a little melted fat and sprinkle over the eggplant. Bake in a moderate oven for 15 minutes, or until the eggplant is tender and the crumbs are browned.

Broiled eggplant is also good, especially if you sprinkle cheese on the top of each slice just before it is done. And the classic quick method is to fry eggplant in deep or shallow fat after it is dipped in flour, in egg and crumbs, or in a thin batter.

Swiss chard is really two vegetables in one. Strip off the green leaves to cook like spinach. But don't throw away the white stalks. Cut them into one inch pieces and cook them like celery for about 20 minutes in boiling water. Then add the leaves and cook about 10 minutes longer. Remember to use unsalted water to keep the chard from turning an unpleasing dark color. Season just before serving with fat, salt, pepper, and a little vinegar or lemon juice.

Prepare kohlrabi exactly as you would a turnip. Trim off the leaves, pare, and slice it crosswise. Cook in lightly salted boiling water for about 20 minutes. Drain and season with melted butter or cream, and salt and pepper to taste.

Okra appears as gumbo in soups and stews down New Orleans way, because it contains a thick, jelly-like substance that is ideal for thickening these dishes.

When served as a vegetable along -- most cooks do away with some of this "jolly" by frying the okra, or by cooking it with tomatoes. Select young okra, with pods measuring from 2 to 4 inches in length. Wash them carefully because the dirt sticks to the outside, dry, and cut crosswise in pieces about one-half inch thick. Heat fat in a frying pan, and cook the okra with the cover on for about 10 minutes -- stirring frequently. Then remove the cover and continue to cook until the okra is tender and lightly brown.

The garden varieties of soybeans are truly a surprise vegetable, with their green color and nutty flavor. Select beans that are nearly full size, but still underripe. To make the soybeans easy to shell, first heat them in the pods for 3 to 5 minutes in boiling water. Drain the beans and, as soon as they are cool enough to handle, you can pop the beans right out of the pods. Then cook the shelled beans in lightly salted water until they are just tender -- usually from 15 to 30 minutes. You'll find that the soybeans need only a light seasoning of salt and pepper, with a little melted butter or crisply fried bacon or salt pork. Soybeans may also be cooked and served in the shell. To eat them, pick up the pods and press the beans out with the thumb and finger.

Cucumbers are featured in so many salads, that many cooks forget how good they are when served hot. You can fry them, boil them, or scallop them. But one of the best ideas is to stuff them with tomatoes and bake them. Pare the cucumbers and cut them in half lengthwise. Then scoop out the pulp to make cucumber shells. Parboil these cucumber shells, or boats, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile cook some chopped onion and parsley in fat, add the cucumber pulp, some chopped raw tomatoes or canned tomatoes, bread crumbs, and seasonings. Cook about 5 minutes. Stuff the cucumbers with this hot mixture, place in a baking dish, add a little water to keep them from sticking and bake about 15 minutes in a moderate oven.

Celery cabbage is another vegetable that can be served either raw or cooked. Cut it crosswise, so there will be no long and stringy fibers. Then cook it like cabbage -- either in boiling water, or panned in a covered frying pan with a little fat.

If your garden furnishes more radishes and green onions than you can use as a relish, try cooking them and serving like any other vegetable. Cooked radishes are especially good when served with a sauce made of top milk or cream, and tender green onions-on-toast are a real delicacy.

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
JULY 31, 1940 :

1-9
475M
RECEIVED
★ AUG 3 1940 ★
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

- - -

PEACHES FOR WINTER EATING

- - -

The peach season ends all too soon for those who enjoy the flavor of the fresh, juicy fruit. But the homemaker, who looks ahead to the months when fresh fruit is less abundant, will can surplus peaches when the price is "right." Along in December the canned peaches are more than welcome as a breakfast fruit, in salads, and in all kinds of desserts. And peach preserves, peach jam, and peach butter will carry the peach season into the winter months.

The peach crop of 1940 is about up to average. There'll be plenty of peaches to eat fresh during the summer--with enough left for canning and preserving. And this is the time of the year for homemakers throughout the country to get out their directions for "putting up" peaches.

Select peaches for canning with even more care than those you plan to eat fresh. Canning does not improve the quality of the fruit, and only the very best peaches are suitable. You can get both freestone and clingstone peaches, either white fleshed or yellow. But the yellow-fleshed freestone peaches are most popular for home canning.

To make sure of the quality, look for peaches that are firm and ripe but not soft. Avoid those that are badly bruised, those that are uneven in shape and have punctures made by worms, and those with brown spots of decay. The pink blush which

is found on many varieties of peaches tells little about the quality. But the rest of the color on the outside of the peach is very important. If this background color is green, the peach may ripen with a poor flavor or it may become shriveled. But the peach is a safe buy, if this green color has changed to a yellow or whitish-yellow color.

The chief problem in canning peaches is to keep them from turning brown after they are peeled. That's why it is important to get the peaches into the containers and then into the water bath as quickly as possible. You can avoid peeling too many peaches -- if you know exactly how many jars or cans you are able to process at one time, and allow from 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of peaches for each quart jar or No. 3 tin can.

Precooking the peaches and packing them hot also helps to prevent the brown discoloration. And the water-bath method of processing is more successful than the oven method. It takes longer to process peaches in the oven, and they may turn brown before they are heated through. Another disadvantage of using the oven method is that the juice bubbles out -- leaving the top peach "high and dry."

Like most other fruits, peaches are canned with a sugar sirup. Make it up ahead of time allowing from 5 to $12\frac{1}{2}$ cups of sugar to a gallon of water, depending on how sweet you like the peaches. Use warm water and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Boil for 3 to 5 minutes, with a peach pit added to every quart of sirup to give it a delightful almond flavor. Strain out the pits before using the sirup.

The skins come off easily, if you dip the peaches in boiling water about one-half minute and then plunge them into cold water for a few seconds. Use a square of cheesecloth or a wire basket to hold the fruit. A knife of glass or stainless steel is best for removing the skins. Cut the peaches in halves to take out the pits, or slice them. Next simmer the peaches in the sirup for 4 to 8 minutes, depending on their firmness. Heat the peaches through, but do not cook them.

Pack the hot peaches into the containers as quickly as possible. Fill the containers with the hot sirup and run a spatula down the side to get out any air bubbles. Seal tin cans, and partially seal glass jars. Place the containers in the boiling water bath and process them for 15 minutes, with the water all around them boiling hard.

Peach preserves with the whole pieces of fruit in a clear sirup are a pleasing sweet to add to any meal. Peel the peaches and use them whole or cut into halves, quarters, or slices. To each pound of fruit allow $3/4$ to 1 pound of sugar. Combine the fruit and sugar in alternate layers and let stand 8 to 10 hours. Or if you want to cook the preserves at once, add one fourth cup of water for each pound of fruit. Boil rapidly until the sirup is somewhat thick, stirring constantly to prevent burning. Pour at once into hot sterilized jars and seal.

Peach jam and peach butter are favorites with hot breads or toast on cold winter mornings. And for them you can use the soft, riper fruit that would not hold its shape so well in canning or preserving.

To make peach jam, first peel the peaches, then remove the pits and crush the fruit. Add $3/4$ to 1 pound of sugar to each pound of peaches. Let the mixture stand for 3 to 4 hours until some of the juice is extracted. Heat slowly until the sugar is dissolved, stirring meanwhile. Continue stirring and bring to a boil. Cook until the fruit is clear and the jam somewhat thick. Pour into hot sterilized jars and seal.

Fruit butter is a thicker product, with a spicy flavor. To make it, crush the peeled peaches and cook until they are soft. Press them through a colander and then through a fine sieve. Measure the fruit pulp and add about half as much sugar as fruit, with a little salt to bring out the sweetness. Boil rapidly and stir constantly. Add spices if you like. You'll find that cloves, cinnamon, and a little allspice are good with peach butter. Test the butter by dropping a little on a cold plate. It is done when there is no rim of liquid separating around the edge. While the butter is boiling hot, pour it into sterilized containers and seal.

If you're planning to save some of your peaches for winter eating, you'll find complete directions in two Farmers' Bulletins, available free from the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. F.B. No. 1762 on "Home Canning of Fruits, Vegetables, and Meats" gives complete directions for canning peaches; F.B. No. 1800 on "Home-made Jellies, Jams, Preserves" tells how to make peach preserves, peach jam, and peach butter.

